

Message Text

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43

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 LAB-04 SIL-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 ISO-00 /052 W

----- 004235

R 261502Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6943

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ILO, ELAB, XM, CO

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFO ON ILO ACTIVITIES

REF: (A) STATE 072386; (B) STATE 203991

1. SUMMARY. THE ILO AND UNDP HAVE HAD TWO LABOR-ORIENTED PROGRAMS IN COLOMBIA, ONE WITH THE NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP (SENA) AND THE OTHER WITH THE MINISTRY OF LABOR. A SMALL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WITH SENA IS SCHEDULED TO END IN DECEMBER, 1976. THIS PROGRAM, AS HAVE OTHERS RELATED TO SENA, HAS BEEN A SUCCESS, IN PART BECAUSE SENA IS ONE OF THE MOST VIABLE INSTITUTIONS IN COLOMBIA. IT HAS ALWAYS HAD ADEQUATE FINANCING AND SOUND MANAGEMENT. IT IS NOW PROVIDING A SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM TO OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. BOTH THE UNDP AND ILO WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH SENA BECAUSE IT IS A SUCCESS STORY. THE MINISTRY OF LABOR PROGRAM HAS THREE ASPECTS, SOCIAL SECURITY, MIGRATORY WORKERS, AND WORKERS EDUCATION. THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (ICSS) IS IN SAD SHAPE. AMU PMO EXPERT HAS BEEN SEEKING WAYS TO RATIONALIZE THE SYSTEM, LEADING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT LATE LAST YEAR OF A DIVISION IN THE MINISTRY TO OVERSEE THE ICSS. THE MIGRATORY WORKER PROBLEM IS SERIOUS. LONG NEGLECTED, MIGRANT WORKERS ARE NOW GETTING GOC ATTENTION THANKS TO ILO ASSISTANCE. WORKER EDUCATION, DIRECTED AT THE RURAL WORK FORCE, IS BADLY NEEDED. RURAL WORKERS ARE A TARGET OF THE GOC IN ITS PROGRAM OF AIDING

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THE POOREST OF THE NATION. THE MINISTRY SUFFERS FROM UNQUALIFIED

PERSONNEL, BUDGETARY RESTRICTIONS, AND OTHER PROBLEMS, BUT HAS IMPROVED SERVICES SOMEWHAT IN RECENT YEARS, END SUMMARY.

2. THE ILO HAS CONDUCTED

PROGRAMS NDR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS

WITH TWO GOC INSTITUTIONS, THE NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP INSTITUTE (SENA) AND THE MINISTRY OF LABOR. THE FOLLOWING IS THE EMBASSY'S ASSESSEMENT OF THE PROGRAMS PER PARA 5 REF A: (1) SENA-PER REF B, THE ILO COMPLETED A HOTEL ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM IN 1975. A SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM (FORMACION PROFESIONAL) WAS ALSO TERMINATED IN 1975. TOURISM IS A GROWING INDUSTRY IN COLOMBIA, AND TRAINING IN THIS SECTOR WAS A PRIORITY OF THE GOC. THE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM HELPED PREPARE COLOMBIA TO BEGIN SIMILAR PROGRAMS WITH OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES, INCLUDING BOLIVIA AND ECUADOR. A MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES WITH ADVISORY ASSISTANCE IN MARKETING, PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT, AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IS SCHEDULED TO END IN DECARBER 1976. OUR INFORMATION IS THAT 4 ILO EXPERTS ARE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT RATHER THAN THE 5 AS INDICATED IN REF B. SINCE SENA HAS A TRI-PARTITE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES HELP DETERMINE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS, THESE ILO PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, IN PART BECAUSE SENA IS ONE OF THE MOST VIABLE INSTITUTIONS IN COLOMBIA. IT RECEIVES A GUARANTEED FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF A 2 PERCENT PAYROLL TAX, AND HAS ALWAYS HAD PRETTY SOLID MANAGEMENT. UNDP PRESIDENT REP INFANTE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT BECAUSE SENA IS SUCCESSFUL, NEW PROGRAMS ARE HARD TO JUSTIFY. HE CLEARLY INDICATEDWL HOWEVER, THAT THE UNDP AND ILO WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH SENA PRECISELY BECAUSE IT IS A SUCCESS STORY. (2) THERE ARE THREE ILO MINISTRY OF LABOR PROGRAMS: (I) SOCIAL SECURITY -THE COLOMBIAN SOCIAL SECURITY INSTITUTE (ICSS) IS ONE OF THE MOST VILLIFIED INSTITUTIONS IN COLOMBIA. SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENTS HAVE ATTEMPTED WITHOUT SUCCESS TO RATIONALIZE THE SYSTEM, WHICH CONTINUES TO BE AFFLICTED WITH A BURGEONING BUREAUCRACY, INADEQUATE SERVICES, POOR MANAGEMENT AND CORRUPTION. THE LOPEZ ADMINISTRATION HAS ATTEMPTED TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THE ICSS, AFF ILO ASSISTANCE, BASICALLY THE SERVICES OF OF TECHNICAL

EXPERT, CONTRIBUTED TO MINISTRY OF LABOR REORGANIZATION IN LATE 1975, ESTABLISHING A DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY. IT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TOO EARLY TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NEW DEPARTMENT OR WHETHER IT WILL HAVE ANY INFLUENCE ON THE ICSS. THE ILO HAS PROPOSED AN EXTENSION OF THE PROGRAM AND A NEW ONE ON SOCIAL SECURITY STATISTICS. (II) MIGRATION -COLOMBIA'S MIGRATORY WORKER POPULATION IS BETWEEN 250-300,000. THESE WORKERS HAVE LONG BEEN AT THE LOW END OF THE ECONOMIC SCALE. IN 1971, THE GOC CONTRACTED WITH THE INTER-GOVERNMENT COMMITTEEAL FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION (ICEM) TO STUDY WAYS OF IMPROVING THEIR

LOT. THE ILO PROGRAM IS AN OUTGROWTH OF THAT STUDY. ONE ILO EXPERT HAS BEEN ADVISING THE MINISTRY ON V GRATGWY WORKERS LEGISLATION, WHICH HAS LED TO IMPORVEMENTS. FOR THOSE WORKERS CROSSING INTO VENEZUELA AND ECUADOR, THE ILO ASSISTED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FIVE REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT OFFICES NEAR THE BORDERS OF THOSE COUNTRIES TO HELP WITH DOCUMENTATION AND OTHER PROBLEMS. (III) WORKERS EDUCATION -THE ORIGINAL CONCENPT BEHIND THIS PROGRAM, TO DEVELP A GOVERNMENT MECHANISM FOR TRADE UNION AND OTHER FORMS OF WORKER EDUCATION, NEVER WAS PUT INTO PRACTICE. MIGRATORY AND OTHER RURAL WORKER PROBLEMS ARE EXTENSIVE AND THE PROGRAM HAS CONCENTRATED ON THESE AREAS. THE PROGRAMS USUALLY HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN SENA RURAL INSTITUTES. ANOTHER ILO EXPERT WORKS IN THIS AREA.

3. REF A, PARA 5F, ILO ASSISTANCE HAS BASICALLY BEEN IN THE FORM OF INDIVIDUAL EXPERTS. (5J), THE UNDP AND ILO SUFFERED BUDGET RESTRICTION IN 1975 -,\$ 1976 SHARPLY CURTAILING PLANNED TRAINING PROGRAMS. SUBSEQUENTLY, ASSISTANCE EXPENSES MAINLY HAVE BEEN FOR EXPERTS' SALARIES AND BENEFITS. IN THE CASE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOR PROGRAMS, THE COSTS HAVE AMOUNTED TO APPROXIMATELY \$48,000 PER MAN YEAR. (5K), ALL OF THE ILO REPRESENTATIVES SPEAK SPANISH. WE CANNOT ASSESS THEIR PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS. (5L). OUR OVERALL ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED AT PRIORITY AREAS, AND HAVE PROVIDED A USEFUL SERVICE. PRECISELY BECAUSE SENA IS A SUCCESSFUL ENTITY AND IT CAN MAKE GOOD USE OF ALL ASSISTANCE OFFERED AND THEREFORE HAS RECEIVED AMPLE OFFERS. IT HAS OBTAINED CMLSIDERABLE ASSISTANCE FROM SEVERAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES UNDER BILATERAL AGREEMENTS. BECAUSE OF SENA'S SUCCESS, IT IS NOW EXPORTING TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW TO OTHER COUNTRIES. ON THE OTHER HAND, MINISTRY OF LABOR ILO PROGRAMS HAVE NOT BEEN SO SUCCESSFUL, PROBABLY BECAUSE THE MINISTRY, ALTHOUGH SHOWING SOME SLIGHT IMPROVEMENT, IS INEFFECTIVE. UNDER THE MINISTRY'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REORGANIZATION PROGRAM, MINISTER OF LABOR DE CROVO IS ATTEMPTING TO FIND QUALIFIED MANAGERS TO STAFF THE MOST IMPORTANT POSITIONS. VERY FEW HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE MINISTRY ITSELF, AND TALENTED INDIVIDUALS WOULD PREFER TO GO TO ALMOST ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCY BECAUSE THE MINISTRY HAS BEEN TRADITIONALLY KNOWN AS A DUMPING GROUND FOR THE TECHNICALLY UNQUALIFIED. THE ILO EXPERTS HAVE COMPLAINED THAT THEY HAVE HAD TROUBLE ENCOUNTERING GOOD COUNTERPARTS. THE MINISTRY HAS ALSO CONTINUED TO SUFFER FROM INADEQUATE FINANCING. NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE OF THESE PROBLEMS, THE MINISTRY COULD PROBABLY CONTINUE TO PROFIT FROM ADDITIONAL ILO SUPPORT.
SANCHEZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VOCATIONAL TRAINING, MIGRATORY WORKERS, LABOR INSTITUTES, SOCIAL INSURANCE, PROGRAM ASSISTANCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BOGOTA08670
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760326-0694
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760818/aaaaaphd.tel
Line Count: 166
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 72386, 76 STATE 203991
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <13 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR INFO ON ILO ACTIVITIES
TAGS: ELAB, XM, CO, ILO, SENA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006